Development of Padmakesharpur as Tourist Place

4704. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Padmakesharpur village near Bhubaneswar in Orissa is said to be the largest 'Snake-Charmers' village in Asia;

(b) wheter Government consider that such a village can be developed as a tourist centre with great advantage; and

(c) if so, what measures Government propose to take to make the village a tourist place?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Development of Tourism is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/U.T. Administrations. However, Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance for specific tourism projects prioritised in consultation with them every year based on the merits of the projects and the availability of funds.

No proposal for development of Padmakesharpur village near Bhubaneswar as a tourist place was prioritised during 1999-2000.

Water Scarcity for Drinking and Irrigation Purposes

4705. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the recently Second World Water Forum at Hague has predicted that by 2025 the world population of about eight billion people will face severe water scarcity for irrigation, sanitation and drinking purposes;

(b) if so, what steps Government are adopting to tide over such an eventuality in the country; and

(c) what are the details and which agencies would be undertaking this gigantic job?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) India receives a rainfall of about 4000 Billion cu.m. every year. Out of this, about 1869 billion cu.m. appears as average annual runoff in the various rivers of the country. Thus, on an average the water availability in the country remains more or less fixed according to the natural hydrologic cycle. It is estimated that due to increasing population, the average annual per capita availability may come down from about 1869 cu.m. at present to 1350 cu.m. by 2025 A.D. at the National level. According to UN criteria any situation of yearly water availability of less than 1000 cu.m. per capita is considered as scarcity condition. Therefore, even by the end of 2025 A.D., India is not likely to face water scarcity situation at the National level. However, spatial and temporal variation of rainfall and uneven water availability may cause local water scarcity in some parts of the country. The requirement of the country upto 2025 A.D. can be met by harnessing the utilizable surface and ground water and their optimal utilization.

To meet the demand for various uses of water, a live storage capacity of 176.73 BCM has been created by construction of large dams and medium projects upto 1995. Projects to add an additional capacity of about 75.42 BCM are under construction and 132.32 BCM are under planning. The replenishable ground water are of the order of 432 BCM, out of which about 154 BCM has been developed for use.

Irrigation, Sanitation and drinking water being State subjects, all schemes relating to them are planned, funded and executed entirely by the State Governments according to their own priorities, However, Central Water Commission and Central Ground Water Board provide necessary technical guidance and assistance to the State Governments.

The National Agenda for Governance envisages provision of safe drinking water to all the next five years. The Department of Drinking Water Supply has been newly created in the Ministry of Rural Development for implementing a programme for attaining this objective.